

# Mead Witter School of Music

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## GRADUATE APPLICATION GUIDE

### FALL 2026

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#### Questions?

James Doing

Graduate Program Manager

[gpm@music.wisc.edu](mailto:gpm@music.wisc.edu)

# Mead Witter School of Music

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## 1. WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

### BEFORE YOU APPLY...

- All candidates must have completed a Bachelors degree in Music at an accredited institution with a minimum GPA of 3.0 before the start of the Fall 2026 semester.
- Doctoral candidates must have completed a Masters degree before the start of the Fall 2026 semester, unless you have obtained the consent of our faculty.
- Additionally, the Music Education and Wind Conducting programs require school teaching experience.



### What degree am I applying for?

Be careful when selecting your degree in the Graduate School application! If you choose the wrong program, you will have to submit a new application and pay a new fee. Please review the [Areas of Study](#) (see right) and make sure you are picking the correct degree program.



### Do I have to send test scores?

The GRE is not required for our graduate programs.

#### English Proficiency

International Students must prove English proficiency by one of the methods listed on our website. If you plan on submitting a TOEFL, IELTS, or DuoLingo score, it must be provided no later than December 1 along with the rest of your application materials. Please plan ahead!



### Do I have to audition?

An audition is required for all Music Performance degrees (except Composition). Please review the specific instructions for your Area of Study.

Candidates for the degrees in Composition, Musicology, and Music Education are not required to complete an audition. Composers will have an interview with Prof. Laura Schwendinger.

### AREAS OF STUDY

[www.music.wisc.edu/areas](http://www.music.wisc.edu/areas)

#### MUSIC

Master of Arts (MA)\*  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)\*

#### Pathway offered:

Musicology

\*The Theory MA/PHD program is not currently being offered.

#### MUSIC EDUCATION

Master of Music (MM)\*

\*The MS and PhD are offered in the Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction  
<https://ci.education.wisc.edu/>

#### MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Master of Music (MM)  
Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA)

#### Pathways offered:

Brass

Composition

Choral Conducting

Orchestral Conducting

Wind Conducting

Jazz \*MM only

Percussion

Piano Performance

Piano Performance & Pedagogy

Collaborative Piano

Strings, Guitar, & Harp

Voice

Woodwinds

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## 2. WHAT DO I NEED TO PREPARE?



In addition to these general requirements, please consult the documents on our website for specific instructions from your Area of Study.

### A. The following materials are required for all candidates:



#### Statement of Purpose

Describe your educational and professional background and what you plan to do with your degree. Be sure to include any relevant teaching experience and other skills that would qualify you to serve as a Teaching Assistant in the School of Music.



#### Musical CV / Full repertoire list

As part of your CV, please include a comprehensive list of repertoire that you have mastered, performed, conducted, and composed.



#### Letters of recommendation

Select no more than 3 people to serve as your recommenders. When you enter their contact information on the application, they will receive an automated link to upload their letters online.



#### Unofficial transcripts

You will upload an unofficial transcript or grade report from each school where you have received a degree. This can be a scan or screenshot of your grade report, or a full transcript.

### B. The following materials are only required for some candidates:



#### Portfolio

Required for all **MUSIC PERFORMANCE** degrees (see Areas of Study above)

See the specific instructions from your Area of Study. You must prepare a separate URL link containing all of your media.



#### Writing sample(s)

Required for MA/PhD Musicology and all DMA candidates (not required for MM)

- DMA candidates must submit 1 sample of their academic writing.
- MA/PhD candidates must submit 2 samples of their academic writing.



#### Composition scores

Required for Composition only

Choose a maximum of 5 scores to match the recordings in your portfolio. Please include the scores in PDF format in your portfolio (see above).

### 3. HOW DO I APPLY?

Complete the steps below no later than **11:59 PM (CST) on Monday, December 1.**

#### STEP 1: Fill out the School of Music application.



<https://forms.gle/drUAd1C8Frw4a5gm9>

Please complete this application first. Here is where you will provide information specifically for the School of Music. If applicable, you will provide your portfolio URL, request a studio assignment, and choose an audition date and modality (in person vs. remote). Please ensure that your submitted portfolio fulfills the requirements listed in your “Area of Study” document on our website.

#### STEP 2: Fill out the Graduate School application.



<https://apply.grad.wisc.edu/>

This is your general application to UW-Madison. Here is where you will upload your transcripts, CV, and Statement, as well as enter the information for your letters of recommendation. In the “Music” section, you will upload your writing samples (if applicable).

❖ Note: In order to complete your Graduate School application, you will need to pay \$75 (U.S. citizen) or \$81 (international). The School of Music is not able to provide fee waivers, so please do not ask. After submitting the application, you can monitor the status of your letters by checking this account.

#### STEP 3: Provide proof of English proficiency (International Students)



<https://music.wisc.edu/graduate-admissions/#toggle-id-3>

See our website for details. If you are required to submit a test score, please send your official test score to UW-Madison (ETS institution code 1846) and send a screenshot or PDF of your score to James Doing for interim processing. If you will not be submitting a test score, be sure to indicate your exemption in the School of Music application (Step 1).

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## 4. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I APPLY?

### Brass, Conducting, Jazz, Percussion, Piano, Strings, Voice, and Woodwinds



#### Prescreening for auditions

Performance faculty will review portfolios and determine eligibility for the full audition. Decisions will be sent no later than Friday, December 19.



#### Auditions

Auditions will be held in January and February. Please consult the documents on our website for specific instructions from your Area of Study regarding audition modalities and repertoire requirements.



#### Travel options

You may visit UW-Madison and complete your audition in person, or you may stay at home and update your portfolio according to the audition requirements, followed by a Zoom interview on the audition day.

- Brass & Jazz applicants who stay at home will audition live on Zoom.
- Conducting auditions must be completed in person.

### Composition, Musicology, and Music Education

No audition is required. Faculty may contact you for further information or to schedule an optional campus visit. Composers may be invited for a Zoom interview with Prof. Laura Schwendinger after initial screening. In any case, your file will be reviewed between December and February.



#### ADMISSION

Admission decisions are usually finalized in mid-February. You will be admitted, denied, or placed on a waitlist for your Area of Study.

Please note that admission to the School of Music does not guarantee admission to the Graduate School. The Graduate School must approve your admission separately on the basis of your official transcripts, which you will be asked to submit at that time.



#### FUNDING

Initial funding offers will be made in mid-March. Detailed information regarding the funding selection process will be provided upon admission to the School of Music.

In the meantime, see the document called "Graduate Funding in the School of Music" on our website for basic information. We offer funding primarily in the form of Fellowships and Teaching Assistantships.